

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SWF-02 AID-20 CEA-02 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-11 FRB-02 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CIEP-02 SP-03

STR-08 TRSE-00 LAB-06 SIL-01 SAM-01 OMB-01 SS-20

NSC-07 L-03 DODE-00 PA-04 USIA-15 PRS-01 DRC-01 /147 W

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R 261651Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9834

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION OECD PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 05161

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: EC RENEGOTIATION: A CLARIFICATION

REF: LONDON 5054

1. DOUGLAS JAY HAS TOLD EMBOFF THAT THE LETTER HE RECEIVED FROM HAROLD WILSON WHICH WAS PLAYED UP BY THE TIMES ON APRIL 24 (REFTEL) WAS ACTUALLY SENT ON NOVEMBER 5, 1973. JAY ALLUDED TO IT PARENTHETICALLY DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE HE GAVE APRIL 23 TO LAUNCH AN ANTI-EC PAMPHLET HE HAD AUTHORED, AND WAS ASTOUNDED WHEN THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT CHOSE TO MAKE IT THE FOCUS OF HIS STORY THE NEXT MORNING.

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2. WHEN THE TIMES STORY PRODUCED A FLOOD OF INQUIRIES, JAY DUG THE LETTER IN QUESTION OUT OF HIS FILES TO CHECK ON ITS ACTUAL WORDING. IN IT WILSON HAD OUTLINED THE VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE ISSUE OF UK MEMBERSHIP OF THE EC MIGHT BE PUT TO THE BRITISH PEOPLE AND HAD DESCRIBED A REFERENDUM AS "THE MOST LIKELY" OPTION. THE PHRASE "ALMOST CERTAINLY," WHICH JAY USED AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE AND WHICH WAS QUOTED BY THE TIMES, HAD NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN IN THE WILSON LETTER AT ALL. JAY HAD SIMPLY BEEN RECOLLECTING THE GIST OF WILSON'S LETTER FROM MEMORY.

3. AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT, JAY'S CHOICE OF WORDS WAS NOT WIDE OF THE MARK SINCE WILSON DID SAY ON THE FLOOR OF THE COMMONS ON MARCH 12, 1974, THAT THE QUESTION WOULD BE PUT TO THE ELECTORATE "ALMOST CERTAINLY" IN THE FORM OF A REFERENDUM, ALTHOUGH HE "COULD CONCEIVE OF CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THERE WOULD BE A GENERAL ELECTION."

4. COMMENT: JAY IS ONE OF THE CHIEF STRATEGISTS OF THE ANTI-EC CAMPAIGN IN BRITAIN. WHILE MICHAEL FOOT AND PETER SHORE ARE TAXED WITH MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, JAY IS FREE TO DEVOTE HIMSELF FULLY TO WHAT HAS BECOME HIS OVERRIDING OBSESSION, I.E., GETTING BRITAIN OUT OF THE COMMON MARKET. UNLIKE FOOT AND SHORE, JAY IS ARDENTLY PRO-AMERICAN AND A STAUNCH DEFENDER OF NATO.

5. JAY TOLD EMBOFF THAT LABOR GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE TO HOLDING A REFERENDUM ON EC MEMBERSHIP. AS HE ENVISAGES IT, REFERENDUM SHOULD GIVE ELECTORATE CHOICE BETWEEN APPROVING CONTINUED MEMBERSHIP ON BASIS OF WHATEVER IMPROVED TERMS CALLAGHAN IS ABLE TO OBTAIN OR CLEAR ALTERNATIVE OF OUTRIGHT WITHDRAWAL. IT WOULD NOT BE SUFFICIENT, IN HIS VIEW, SIMPLY TO ASK PEOPLE TO APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE RESULTS OF RENEGOTIATION. JAY CONCEDED THAT CABINET MIGHT WELL SPLIT OVER WHAT RECOMMENDATION GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE TO ELECTORATE, BUT DID NOT RULE OUT POSSIBILITY THAT CABINET MIGHT ORGANIZE REFERENDUM WITHOUT MAKING ANY RECOMMENDATION AT ALL.

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6. UNLIKE FOOT, WHO IS KNOWN TO FAVOR AN EARLY GENERAL ELECTION, JAY WOULD PREFER TO SEE THE REFERENDUM HELD BEFORE AN ELECTION -- FOR THE VERY ELEMENTAL REASON THAT LABOR MIGHT LOSE THE ELECTION AND WITH IT WHAT HE REGARDS AS BRITAIN'S LAST CHANCE TO GET OUT OF THE EC.

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## Message Attributes

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